

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS:

Claims 1 and 7 are currently amended. No new matter is added. Claims 1 – 10 are currently pending in the application, with claims 1 and 7 being independent.

Applicant has carefully considered the contents of the Office Action and respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of the subject application in view of the explanations noted below.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1 – 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,683,643 to Takayama et al. (the Takayama '643 patent). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, because the Takayama '643 patent clearly does not disclose, teach or render obvious the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 7.

Independent claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, automatically controlling the shutter driving unit to periodically drive the shutter.

Independent claim 7 recites, *inter alia*, automatically exposing CCDs periodically to light for a predetermined amount of time.

The Takayama '643 patent discloses a charge coupled device (CCD) camera that compensates for defective CCDs. The Takayama '643 patent describes the detection of white flaws after switch 15 (FIG. 1) is turned on (col. 11, line 52), when the temperature of CCD1 detected by the temperature sensor 13 arrives at or exceeds the prescribed reference temperature (col. 12, lines 17 – 19), immediately when a mode switch 16 is turned on (col. 12, lines 34 – 37) or after turning on mode switch 16 and pressing the shutter (col. 12, lines 34 – 39). The Takayama '643 patent also describes the detection of black flaws only when pressing the shutter (col. 12, lines 61 – 66). Therefore, the Takayama '643 patent only checks for defective pixels when *manually* triggered. Thus, the Takayama '643 patent does not disclose or suggest automatically controlling the shutter driving unit to periodically drive the shutter as recited in independent claim 1 or automatically exposing CCDs periodically to light for a predetermined amount of time as recited in independent claim 7.

Page 3 of the August 5, 2008 Office Action states that the Takayama '643 patent discloses periodically driving the shutter. Col. 16, lines 33 – 50. However, this section

merely describes the control circuit 8 controlling the aperture and/or shutter speed when the mode switch 16 is set in a particular mode. As illustrated in the flowchart shown in FIG. 8, this action is *manually* triggered by photographing an image (step S4). Col. 17, lines 50 – 56. Thus, the only periodic control exercised by the control circuit 8 is when a photograph is periodically taken. Because the photographs are taken manually, the Takayama '643 patent does not disclose or suggest automatically controlling the shutter driving unit to periodically drive the shutter as recited in independent claim 1 or automatically exposing CCDs periodically to light for a predetermined amount of time as recited in independent claim 7.

Furthermore, the Takayama '643 discloses that the control circuit 8 merely *controls* an aperture and/or shutter speed. The Takayama '643 patent does not disclose or suggest that the control circuit *drives* the aperture and/or shutter.

Lacking an element recited in independent claims 1 and 7, the Takayama '643 patent does not anticipate independent claims 1 and 7 because a "claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California, 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Therefore, the Takayama '643 patent does not anticipate or render obvious independent claims 1 and 7.

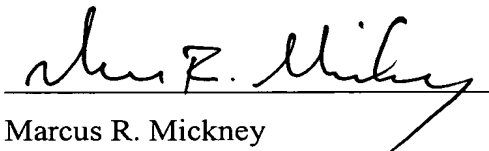
Claims 2 – 6 and 8 – 10, being dependent upon independent claims 1 and 7, respectively, are also allowable for the above reasons. Moreover, these dependent claims recite additional features further distinguishing them over the cited patents, such as the control unit being adapted to control the shutter driving unit to operate the shutter at a low speed of claim 2; the control unit being adapted to control the shutter driving unit to operate the shutter at a lower speed in a predetermined interval based on a vertical period of the CCD data of claim 3; the control unit being adapted to control the shutter driving unit to alternately operated the shutter in odd fields and even fields of the CCDs at the low speed of claim 4; and amplifying the electric signals of the individual CCDs and comparing the amplified electric signals of the CCD to the CCD defect threshold level of claim 8. Therefore, dependent claims 2 – 6 and 8 – 10 are not anticipated or rendered obvious by the cited patents, particularly within the overall claimed combination.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 – 10 are in condition for allowance. Prompt and favorable action is solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marcus R. Mickney", is written over a horizontal line.

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